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New York

President:	Mr. De La Sablière	(France)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	Brazil	Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Kitaoka
	Philippines	Mr. Mercado
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Denisov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Manongi
	United States of America	Mrs. Patterson

Agenda

Africa's food crisis as a threat to peace and security

Briefing by Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme

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05-40442 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Africa's food crisis as a threat to peace and security

Briefing by Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme. After the briefing, I will give the floor to those members who wish to make comments or address questions to Mr. Morris.

I now give the floor to Mr. Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

Mr. Morris: I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to visit with the Council about a range of humanitarian issues, specifically as they affect peace and security in Africa.

Yesterday, I listened carefully to the comments that you, Mr. President, made at luncheon. I thought that in just a few short sentences you offered extraordinary insight and guidance with respect to the humanitarian agenda and the development agenda as they relate to very tough issues of peace and security and the extraordinary impact that those issues have on hundreds of millions of people who are, truly, so desperately at risk. You said that it was important to focus on the essential. You said that there was no possibility of reaching the Millennium Development Goals without peace. Indeed, I would say that without peace, there is no chance of reaching the Millennium Development Goals. You talked about the importance of accelerating the post-conflict process to address the Millennium Development Goals. You then said that prevention is just simply common sense, and that the best way to make progress in the area of development is through good governance. I admire a person who can so say much with such few words. Your comments were powerful.

A few weeks ago, President Obasanjo of Nigeria made a trip to Rome to visit with the World Food Programme Executive Board. He came to talk about the relationship between food and peace and security. But he said something that I will never forget: "A hungry person is an angry person. It is in all of our interests to take away the cause of their anger".

Recently, I had the privilege of making my fifth trip through southern Africa as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Humanitarian Needs in Southern Africa. I was accompanied on the trip by Ann Veneman of UNICEF and Peter Piot of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

It is my judgement that the greatest humanitarian crisis we face today in the world is not in Darfur or Afghanistan or North Korea, as challenging as those issues are. It is the gradual disintegration of the social structures in southern Africa. Hunger is at the very core of that issue. A lethal mix of AIDS, recurring drought and failing governance and capacity is eroding social and political stability.

The facts relating to southern Africa are extraordinary and overwhelming. Last year 1 million lives were lost to AIDS. We are now entering the peak of the pandemic, the years 2005 to 2007. The numbers will continue to rise. On average, life expectancy in the region has decreased by 20 years. Think of that. In North America, Europe and Japan children can expect to live nearly twice as long as children in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Much of life expectancy in southern Africa is barely more than it was in Europe during the Middle Ages. If there is a sadness, something that is absolutely reprehensible, it is the impact of all of this on children.

Earlier this year, the World Food Programme estimated that 3.5 million people would need emergency food aid in southern Africa. Today our estimate is that 8.3 million people will need food aid, in large part as a result the lack of rain in the region in

January, February and much of March. More than 4 million people are at risk in Zimbabwe, 1.6 million in Malawi, 1.2 million in Zambia and 900,000 in Mozambique. The case of Zambia is particularly important when one thinks that in the last two years the World Food Programme was able to buy 150,000 metric tons of food in Zambia for use elsewhere in the world.

The prevalence of HIV is taking a huge toll in terms of lives lost and reduced life expectancy. It is directly undermining the capacity of communities to produce enough food. HIV prevalence ranges from a low of 12 per cent in Mozambique to a high of 42 per cent of the adult population in Swaziland. Government ministers talk frequently about losing their closest colleagues to AIDS, and they worry that their educational and health systems are collapsing. In 2003 Lesotho lost a third of its health workers and 15 per cent of its teachers. The Prime Minister of Lesotho said to me, "Jim, by 2010 half the teachers in our country will be dead because of AIDS". President Mwanawasa of Zambia told me that his country was losing teachers at twice the rate they were able to replace them.

Outside many rural villages land lies fallow, with no one to till it. A generation has gone missing. There is no one to teach the next generation to farm. The fastest growth industry in the region is the business of producing funerals. AIDS has claimed the lives of nearly 8 million African farmers, more than the total number of farmers in North America and the European Union combined — a staggering fact. Today there are 14 million orphans in sub-Saharan Africa because of HIV/AIDS, and that number will grow to 20 million over the next five years. The demographics are strongly in place, and there is nothing we can do to turn that number around in the short run.

I wish that I could find a way to stir up adequate public and media interest in the suffering in southern Africa. I will never forget a 70-year-old grandmother in Swaziland. She and her blind 80-year-old husband were heading a household with a dozen small children. Some were her grandchildren, others not. In much of Africa villages act as extended families. It is their form of social security. In some respects, that system has been the envy of the world. But that system is now stretched to the breaking point where AIDS has taken its greatest toll.

Hunger is a symptom of failure: a failed harvest, failure to cope with a natural disaster and failure to overcome social inequities, ethnic strife and racial hatred. But addressing hunger and malnutrition and saving the women and children who suffer most require the cooperation of those in charge in the very areas where those failures take place. Even with the cooperation of civil authorities, delivering food and other humanitarian aid is a dangerous business. The World Food Programme has lost more staff to death than any agency in the United Nations, with the exception of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Assaults on convoys and hostage-taking are not uncommon. We have lost three staff members in the last few weeks in Darfur.

The United Nations has a Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Jean Ziegler. In some ways, he and I could not be more different in our political and economic outlooks. He is a leading Swiss socialist and I am a confirmed American capitalist. But he is a good guy and we have a good friendship. I hope he would say the same about me. We do not see the world through the same lens, but on one point we could not agree more: vulnerable, hungry people, especially women and children, have a right to food. And we agree that food should never be a weapon in war or an instrument of diplomatic coercion. President Reagan said that eloquently when he approved United States food aid for Ethiopia in 1985 during the great famine there, despite his strong antipathy toward the communist regime in Ethiopia at the time. He said simply, "A hungry child knows no politics". Whatever a Government's perceived sins or the level of popular indignation, we cannot withhold aid as a political tactic in an emergency.

Over the last decade, we have seen starvation used as a weapon in war in Darfur, the southern Sudan, Somalia, Angola, northern Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and West Africa. The tactic is not unique to Africa; it was employed in Europe in 1992 by the Bosnian Serbs in the siege of Sarajevo. When hatred strips us of our civility, we are all capable of incredible brutality. The most egregious example of the use of food as a weapon today is in Darfur, where the situation continues to deteriorate. In January, we estimated that 2.8 million people would need food aid to avert mass starvation; today, the number is closer to 3.5 million. We are doing pretty well on the food front, but camp workers live in fear that, as food supplies in

Darfur dwindle, even more people will be drawn into the camps where the United Nations and non-governmental organizations are woefully short of being able to provide water, sanitation and basic health services.

In much of Africa, the prevalence of hunger is an accurate barometer for the level of social instability. It does not matter whether that instability is caused by civil conflict, drought, AIDS, bad governance or any combination of those factors — hunger is almost always within the group. A United Nations review of half a dozen conflicts in Africa over a 20-year period showed an absolute correlation between armed conflict and reduced agricultural production, on average by 20 per cent per year, with a concomitant rise in the prevalence of hunger.

Conflict clearly can cause hunger, but what about the reverse? The relationship between hunger and conflict is similar to the relation between hunger and poverty. Hunger is both a cause and an effect of poverty. It is also both a cause and an effect of political conflict.

One African in three is malnourished and there has been little sign of change in that over the last 10 years. In Central Africa, where war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has disrupted the region, the percentage of undernourished people rose from 53 per cent in 1995 to more than 70 per cent today. In other areas where conflict has been less of a factor — Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi and Madagascar — the nutritional situation of the people has improved. All of us engage in an exercise called "vulnerability mapping", in which we use various indicators, such as market prices, rates of malnutrition and household food consumption patterns to put together maps showing hunger hot spots. The correlation between hot spots and political violence in such places as Somalia, the Sudan and northern Uganda is striking.

Chronic hunger in the African countryside is a destabilizing influence that undermines political stability and security. It spurs the continuing migration of rural people into cities, where the existence of at least some basic social services — including subsidized or free food — acts as an incentive for people to come to the urban environment. There is a chance that as antiretroviral treatment becomes more widely available — undoubtedly first in urban areas — that, too, will act as a magnet to enhance, encourage and increase rural-urban migration. Waves of AIDS orphans are fleeing the countryside and arrive in cities without any means of economic support, often contributing to social disintegration and crime. Hungry children are far more easily recruited as child soldiers in such places as northern Uganda. We need a dedicated effort through school feeding and other activities to keep those children in rural areas and in school.

Projections for urban population growth in sub-Saharan Africa are among the highest in the world, with cities such as Nairobi, Lagos and Lusaka experiencing growth rates of over 6 per cent per year. The impact of rural-urban migration on employment in Africa has been precisely the opposite of that in Western Europe and the United States — it has led to higher rather than lower rates of unemployment and social instability. At a certain point, the capacities of municipal Governments are stretched to the limit and social demands are not met, aggravating internal political and social tensions among competing ethnic groups perhaps not accustomed to sharing the same space.

Competition for limited food resources can ignite violence and instability. The fact that African agriculture is so dependent on rainfall and that there are comparatively large pastoral populations contributes to population movements that can incite conflict. The violence in Darfur, for example, has reduced the movements of nomads and led to overgrazing in areas with insufficient water, and the result has been drought-like conditions. We have seen that problem for decades not just in the Sudan, but in Mauritania, Senegal and other places as well. When families can neither plant nor market livestock products, they begin to move. The economy in North Darfur is now in total shambles. Most markets are closed, fighting has virtually eliminated cultivation, and cereal prices have skyrocketed. Insecurity has pushed people northwards, placing unbearable strains on scarce supplies of water and wild foods. In March, an inter-agency mission warned that, without more aid, there would be further displacement and growing tensions between the community of internally displaced persons and the host communities.

Access to food was used as a weapon at the height of the civil war in the Sudan. The famine in 1988 cost a quarter of a million lives. Now that there is a peace agreement in much of the Sudan, it is ironic

that support for food aid has dwindled, and that could well undermine the peace process. It is our estimate that at least 3.2 million people in the rest of the Sudan, who are generally affected by the peace process, are severely at risk of hunger and require food. There are now more displaced Sudanese fleeing into neighbouring Kenya and Uganda as refugees than returning home. That is quite remarkable.

The continuing presence of large numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees is inherently a threat to political and economic stability, and the threat of hunger presents significant complications in resettling them. It is difficult to persuade a family in Angola, for example, to return to its home village if it does not have sufficient food to tide it over to the next harvest. WFP invests heavily in repatriation packages that allow ex-combatants to feed themselves and their families while they get re-established at home.

Food aid has been a critical component in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts in Africa. In the last five years alone, we have targeted 800,000 combatants in Liberia, Burundi, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Angola. I can never help but mention, as we look at the ex-combatants on all sides of the conflict in Liberia, that 70 to 80 per cent of them were very young children. Just this past week, we approved a new demobilization aid package for 150,000 former army and militia combatants in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where pressure to demobilize and disarm has grown in recent months.

In West Africa, where thousands are still displaced by over a decade of war, food aid is used to help restore social and economic stability. One of my colleagues has reported that today's stability in West Africa is fragile, and progress is impossible if people lack basics like food, shelter and the means to keep their families healthy. Food aid is now a tool to support education, help rebuild communities and give people the means to safeguard their own welfare.

A peace deal brokered by South Africa has encouraged some optimism with regard to Côte d'Ivoire, but the country remains dangerously divided. Disarmament was due to start this week but will be a challenge. Our operations target 922,000 people in the region, including 700,000 in Côte d'Ivoire and the remainder in neighbouring Burkina Faso, Mali and Ghana. We provide rations for 26,000 Liberian refugees and displaced persons within Côte d'Ivoire. The fighting in Côte d'Ivoire ostensibly began over political disenfranchisement. Here again, competition for limited agricultural resources played a role as the economy sputtered, living standards fell and the number of internal migrants began to rise.

In our view, there are few phenomena in modern life as political as humanitarian aid. The world's major donors all make clearly political choices on which humanitarian aid projects to fund. Some make those choices in an effort to have a global scope to their emergency aid, others concentrate regionally, on former colonies or where they see the greatest socio-economic interest at home. Some time ago, we compared aid channelled through WFP with the broader patterns of ODA, which includes humanitarian assistance, and the results were interesting. In 2003, 23 percent of ODA went to least developed countries and 24 percent to Africa. WFP's portfolio is heavily emergency-oriented and heavily African in focus. Three quarters of our aid — our work — went to least developed countries and African countries.

Overall commitments to ODA are climbing, and recent European initiatives, especially in the Nordic countries and the European Union, are especially encouraging. Food aid, which is critically important in Africa, is in sharp decline. Globally, it dropped by more than 1.8 million metric tons last year, excluding Iraq. This is happening despite the fact that the number of hungry people worldwide actually rose from 790 million in 1990 to 852 million today. Had the Chinese not had the remarkable success of moving 300 million people out of conditions of hunger and poverty, by their own standards, over the last 25 years — truly one of humankind's great accomplishments — the number of hungry people in the world would be simply out of sight.

Occasionally I have thought that the worst place for a hungry child to live in Africa today would be in a country at peace with its neighbours and relatively stable, but just plain poor. Funding levels rise with the incidence of violence and media interest.

We are encouraged by growing donor attention to some of the less popular emergencies. President Bush's recent announcement of 50,000 tons of food aid for North Korea was particularly welcome, as was an earlier donation by Germany.

Let me give the Council a very powerful example that helps to make clear the importance of food aid. In a comparison between a 7-year-old boy in North Korea to his 7-year-old counterpart in South Korea, the North Korean boy would be 8 inches shorter and 20 pounds lighter.

The Blair Commission has been extraordinary in focusing public attention on humanitarian and development needs in Africa. Presidents Lula, Chirac and Lagos, as well as Prime Minister Zapatero, are working together to give hunger top priority.

As I close, may I thank the members of the Council for their support for Africa's hungry and for the World Food Programme. France has recently doubled its contribution; Japan, Denmark and the United Kingdom have been consistently strong contributors for emergencies; and Russia, China and India have joined the ranks of our donors. Once again in 2004, the United States provided more than $1 billion of support.

There are encouraging signs for Africa. The G-8 debt initiative; renewed popular interest, as seen in the revival of Live Aid; the Bush-Blair announcement of $674 million in emergency food aid; the work of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union; and other home-grown development initiatives give us cause for optimism. WFP itself is trying to be more creative in its approach and is looking at a famine insurance scheme in Ethiopia, in partnership with the World Bank. Ethiopia is an unusual place in that it has the highest per-capita support for emergencies and the lowest for development work. We are also looking for ways to maximize the impact of the support you give us. In some respects, we are taking the perspective of the insurance industry, where we will actuarially determine the reliability of the support you provide for us actually coming to our bank account. Once we determine actuarially the reliability of what is likely to come, we can begin to spend that money on the first day, as opposed to waiting for the cash actually to be transferred. We know that if we are able to use the resources we have earlier, we can probably feed 20 per cent more people with the same amount of money during the course of a year.

We are proud that globally WFP has phased out of food aid in 25 countries since the mid-1990s. One day, we want to phase out of Africa, too.

In 2000 at the Millennium Summit, every nation here made the pledge to halve hunger and poverty. It is time we began to show progress and, with that, build peace and security on a troubled continent. The most powerful leverage to investment we can all make is to find a way to feed the 300 million hungry children in this world. That is doable proposition; it is not an expensive proposition. The payoff — the change in a young person's life when he or she is fed early in life and has a chance to go to school, even for a few years — everything about that child's life and that community, and, ultimately, that country, changes for the better. The cash requirement to do it, in partnership with the host countries, is not a huge amount of money, but, in my judgement, it is the most powerful opportunity we have to meet the Millennium Development Goals by virtually, over a period of 10 years, eliminating child hunger in the world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Executive Director of the World Food Programme for his very comprehensive briefing.

Since there is no list of speakers for this meeting, I would invite Council members who wish to take the floor to so indicate to the Secretariat.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): Let me start by thanking you, Sir, for having arranged this briefing today. Inviting Mr. James Morris to brief the Security Council on Africa's food crisis as a threat to peace and security is the sort of initiative that helps us broaden our understanding of conflict prevention and conflict resolution in the Security Council's work.

I should like also to thank Mr. Morris for his thorough briefing — a briefing that clearly demonstrates how useful the insights offered are for the Council's work. If I may say so, Mr. Morris's account of the situation facing millions and millions of poor people in Africa on a daily basis is an extremely useful reality check for our work.

We all have a role and responsibilities in helping to break the vicious circle of instability, poverty and protracted humanitarian crisis. The first Millennium Development Goal is to halve poverty by 2015, and one of the prerequisites for reaching that very ambitious target is, among others, that humanitarian assistance must be completed by activities that bridge the transition to development.

The expected establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission will mark a new beginning for a comprehensive approach to countries emerging from conflict. In the post-conflict phase, the Commission will provide a forum for the coordination of, among other things, action related to humanitarian issues.

The situation in the Sudan was discussed extensively during yesterday's consultations. However, I would like to reiterate our concern about the humanitarian situation. Tens of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons are returning to south Sudan, and a continuous relief effort is needed in order to secure peace and stability.

We share Mr. Morris's deep concern about the humanitarian situation in Africa, in particular the affects of the so-called triple threat of food insecurity, HIV/AIDS and weakened governance capacity, which is relevant in relation to the present developments in many African countries, including Zimbabwe. We are gravely concerned at the current crisis in Zimbabwe, which has left more than 275,000 people homeless and has led to further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis. It is important that the Government in Zimbabwe live up to its international obligations pertaining in particular to scrupulous respect for human rights.

In the light of the present situation in Zimbabwe, we commend the Secretary-General for his appointment of the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT as his Special Envoy for Human Settlement Issues in Zimbabwe, and we look forward to receiving her report upon her return from Zimbabwe.

I have a few brief questions to address to Mr. Morris.

First, we would be interested in Mr. Morris's comments on coordination between the World Food Programme and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations — for example, on dealing with food insecurity in conflict situations and the handling of food aid in such areas. I am thinking particularly about the Sudan in that context.

Secondly, the need for an exceptional response has rightly been emphasized in connection with the triple threat and the potential dangers linked to instability. What, in Mr. Morris's view, are the most urgent priorities in the ongoing international work? More specifically, how does he see the contribution of the World Food Programme?

Thirdly, as United Nations Special Envoy, Mr. Morris has repeatedly stressed the importance of the coordination arrangements that have been established in Johannesburg for United Nations activities in southern Africa. What is the reason that they have been especially successful? Does he see some more general lessons to be learned by the United Nations?

Finally, if the World Food Programme decides to make food aid available to Zimbabwe, will it then obtain guarantees from the Government that the aid will be distributed according to needs?

Let me conclude by commending Mr. James Morris for the active advocacy role he has played, highlighting the plight of millions of people whose lives have been ruined by crises that are very real to them, but very often — too often — neglected by us.

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I, too, should like to welcome the Executive Director of the World Food Programme and to thank him for today's briefing.

We fully agree with the idea set out by President Obasanjo of Nigeria and used by Mr. Morris when he began his briefing today, that (*spoke in English*) "A hungry person is an angry person". That is true, and we all understand it. That is why Russia, as a responsible member of the international community, believes that the challenge of strengthening peace and security is intrinsically linked to the socio-economic development of Africa and other unsettled areas of the world. For that reason, we undertake efforts in various areas to assist African countries.

I should like to cite two or three statistics. Russia has written off, or pledged to write off, debt of African countries amounting to more than $16 billion, including more than $2 billion in the context of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. Our Government has taken additional risk by deciding to give additional contributions to the Initiative's Trust Fund and to participate in the next replenishment of the International Development Association, for the period 2006-2014. Sub-Saharan Africa will receive approximately half — 49 per cent — of that sum. We are trying to continue to help Africa to train its own nationals in the area of public health. In addition, we

regularly provide emergency humanitarian assistance on a bilateral basis.

However, we understand that that is not enough. We are therefore working to develop partnerships with multilateral donors, primarily with the World Food Programme. Mr. Morris mentioned that fact in his statement. This year, we will be making regular contributions to the Programme's humanitarian activities.

We fully agree with the idea that only coordinated action by the international community to provide assistance to African countries, primarily in the humanitarian area, will help those countries make progress in implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura (Brazil): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely briefing. I also express my appreciation to Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), for the information he has provided us.

As we observed in the recent debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the number and the scope of humanitarian disasters provoked by post-cold-war conflicts are staggering. Civilians have been increasingly victimized in armed conflict through ethnic cleansing, displacement, deliberate targeting and, with devastating consequences, starvation.

The Security Council has paid due consideration to the issue of humanitarian crises resulting from conflicts, and we welcome this opportunity to examine the correlation of famine and armed conflict and how the international community can coordinate its action in order to best address that issue.

The World Food Programme is the United Nations agency with the greatest logistical capacity for providing urgently needed foodstuffs to people in emergency situations, both those related to natural causes and those derived from conflicts, which is our primary concern in this forum.

Given Brazil's involvement in action against hunger and poverty, it will come as no surprise that we attach a great deal of importance to the concept of food security, one of the pillars of the work of the World Food Programme. Ensuring food security is a moral imperative, both in emergency situations and on a permanent basis.

We fully endorse the WFP's twin-track approach, which addresses those two challenges through the implementation of both emergency and more structurally oriented development operations. The twin-track approach is needed to address the correlation between famine and conflict, because achieving food security is indispensable for creating conditions in which conflict-ridden societies may emerge from conflict. It is also true that the failure to achieve food security makes peaceful societies more vulnerable to conflict.

The international community needs to tackle the deep-rooted socio-economic causes of conflicts and humanitarian crises in order to prevent the emergence, spread and recurrence of conflicts. It is in that context that WFP efforts to ensure long-term food security must be placed.

Lastly, we would like to point out that in order for the World Food Programme to fulfil its role of ensuring food security, it is necessary that it be provided with reliable technical resources, without which, in the definition of priorities, certain emergencies tend to be forgotten. It is therefore essential to improve the financial mechanisms at our disposal while underlining that humanitarian assistance must be provided on the basis of existing needs and allocated in a non-discriminatory, balanced and proportionate manner.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): I thank you, Mr. President, for arranging this most welcome exchange between members of the Security Council and the Executive Director of the World Food Programme. I would like to join other members of the Council in thanking the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Humanitarian Needs in Southern Africa, Mr. James Morris, for a highly useful and timely — though grim and sobering — briefing. Today, the serious humanitarian challenges facing the African continent once again demand the Council's attention and careful consideration.

The practice of periodic briefings to the Council on humanitarian developments in Africa and elsewhere is indeed very welcome and very useful. We commend Mr. Morris and his Programme for their dedication and efforts. The periodic missions he has conducted to the Southern African region are proof of the special emphasis the United Nations places on addressing the

humanitarian crisis and the needs of the region as effectively and as urgently as possible.

Regarding today's meeting, we welcome the opportunity for the Security Council to be informed of and to examine humanitarian challenges that could constitute ominous threats to regional peace, security and stability, although those particular situations have not at this time been formally taken up by the Council.

Romania cannot get used to the idea that there can be any such thing as "silent" or "ignored" crises for the main international organ entrusted with the maintenance and safeguarding of peace and security: the Security Council. The areas in Southern Africa to which Mr. Morris so eloquently referred — such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Namibia and Swaziland — appear to be most vulnerable and most severely affected by the triple threat of food insecurity, high rates of HIV/AIDS infection and weak governance. In many cases under scrutiny, the political disenfranchisement of considerable segments of the population only adds to that combination of factors. If they are not adequately dealt with, those factors, taken together, have the real potential to affect peace and stability in the region.

Romania fully agrees that, because of its magnitude and severity, the crisis in Southern Africa requires sustained support from the international community in addressing it. The humanitarian response seems critical for those countries, particularly with regard to food assistance, since in many cases food insecurity has recently been exacerbated.

In that regard, the situation in Zimbabwe is of particular concern to us. The situation is deteriorating; food shortages are becoming chronic; and the number of people in need of assistance is increasing. We call upon the Government to work together with the international community and the humanitarian agencies to improve the food security situation and to meet the needs of the vulnerable population. The Government should waste no time in providing the donor community with credible figures with respect to the need for food assistance.

Finally, we would like perhaps to hear from Executive Director Morris about how he would suggest the Council could do more to support and complement the humanitarian efforts of the various United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Southern Africa. For it remains our belief that only integrated and coordinated actions can break the cycle of poverty and instability in that region.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): Like other colleagues, I am very grateful to Mr. Morris for his detailed and very sober briefing on the food security situation in Southern Africa and for his comprehensive assessment, which I thought successfully set out the context of the situation as he sees it following his visit.

It is sad, but it is true, that hunger remains a major feature in many African countries. This year, despite a better-than-average harvest overall, there are significant crises, both looming and actual, in several countries. The United Kingdom noted carefully what the Executive Director said about the situation in Darfur and elsewhere, and we have to take account of that in our policies.

The underlying causes of hunger are very complex, but there is no doubt that there are links both to governance and to peace and security — and these are the principal concern of the Security Council. If I may quote the Executive Director, "A lethal mix of AIDS, recurring drought and failing governance ... is eroding social and political stability" (*supra*). That is the situation we confront. The forthcoming September summit will provide a major opportunity to take a step forward on development and to try to secure, on time, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. But essentially, development is a bargain between donors and recipients. The former must do more, and they must do it better; and the latter must tackle governance and corruption and have the policies to achieve the Goals. But governance is itself an indicator of the political state of a country. Bad governance can be a sign of a lack of democracy, of declining respect for human rights or of a potential — or even actual — conflict. Food shortages and the inadequate distribution of food are known causes of instability and can contribute to increasing the potential for conflict. Again, as Mr. Morris put it, hunger is both a cause and an effect of conflict. That is put very succinctly, and the duality of that relationship is clear.

Moreover, bad governance is itself a cause of food insecurity. Food crises are often related to access to food and linked to policies of Government. It is not always solely agricultural production. And it is often poor governance and mismanagement rather than

drought that are the cause of a crisis. Lack of food; poverty; increasing disease through lack of immunization: these can lead to increased refugee flows. And the impact on regional peace and security or, as Mr. Morris put it, on stability, is evident.

Zimbabwe is an obvious example. The crisis there is particularly distressing. The international community is already gearing up to increase assistance in response to another poor harvest in that country. The poor communities there have been devastated not just by low food production but by the continuing economic collapse which has undermined their ability to buy food and other staples. Now we are also responding to an additional crisis, a crisis caused by the Zimbabwean Government's crackdown on the poorest communities in that country. Up to 300,000 people have been made homeless, and thousands of children have been forced to abandon school. It is important to realize that this particular crisis has been caused by the action of the Zimbabwean Government; it is a man-made, not a natural, phenomenon. The economic collapse in Zimbabwe is the result of bad policies and bad governance.

No less a figure that Amartya Sen has argued that the role of democracy in preventing famine is now well known. He has pointed out that the great famines have invariably taken place under authoritarian regimes. So we, like others, look forward to the report to be produced by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, on her visit to Zimbabwe, and we hope that the Council will give it due consideration.

As for the United Kingdom, in response to the current crisis we have already given more than $570,000 through United Nations agencies, in addition to a contribution since September 2001 of $100 million for relief and HIV/AIDS programmes in Zimbabwe. For our part, we will consider further contributions if, sadly, they prove necessary.

It is right that members of the Council should express concern about the impact that food security has on conflict, on peace and on wider security. But we must highlight, too, that bad governance and a failure to work with the international community to prevent food insecurity, as in Zimbabwe, is a legitimate concern for the international community.

If I may, I would like to make some precise points relating to what we think might be proposals for future action. First, the Executive Director described the so-called triple threat of food insecurity, HIV/AIDS and weakened governance capacity. We agree very much that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has increased the vulnerability of many poor communities in Africa and has weakened the ability of many Governments to respond. The international community needs to do more to help.

Secondly, the evidence of changing climatic patterns in Africa needs to be monitored closely for the long-term impact on food production and other natural resources. That should help us to predict possible food insecurity, and to take preventive action.

Thirdly, humanitarian access is crucial and the Executive Director touched on the real problems that his personnel have had and the tragedies that have befallen them. Jan Egeland also made the point, when we were debating the protection of civilians, that, where there are crisis hunger situations, we must make clear that it is the responsibility of Governments to provide the World Food Programme and all other humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations with full cooperation and access to those in need.

Of course, that is a secondary responsibility of Governments, in a way. Their primary responsibility is to protect their own people and to put in place policies which safeguard them so as to try to avoid such problems.

Fourthly, the persistent nature of hunger in Africa means that we all now need to look particularly hard at how the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals can be secured more quickly than is happening at present. The year 2150 is not acceptable. Where hunger is the result of chronic poverty rather than an unforeseen crisis, we need to help African Governments provide a long-term response, instead of relying on an emergency system. Again, Mr. Morris's figures on Ethiopia were very revealing. That emphasis on the need to tackle child hunger by feeding and educating children in their places of origin is a good example of how to prevent crises.

My last point, which I am addressing to colleagues in the Council in general, is that prevention is so much better than cure. The primary role of the Council is to preserve and ensure international peace and security, and to do that we have to be better at predicting and preventing conflict before it happens.

When humanitarian crises, injustice, oppression and bad governance come together, we risk instability and conflict, and then it is the responsibility of the Council and of the United Nations more widely to address such situations and try to help.

Mr. Mercado (Philippines): We join other delegations in welcoming Mr. James Morris, and we thank him for his briefing on the food crisis in Africa. We commend Mr. Morris for his work as the helmsman of the World Food Programme (WFP), a very important agency which brings the United Nations presence right to the hearts of the peoples of the world.

Mr. Morris's briefing today reinforces the incontrovertible link between the maintenance of peace and security and development, the nexus mentioned in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). Mr. Morris's briefing clearly shows that, in addressing issues of conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding, we should also take into account more earthly concerns, such as food security.

The fact that this is the third briefing to the Council by Mr. Morris since 2002 signifies that, after several years, the international community still needs to devote a huge amount of time and a great many resources to the food crisis in Africa. We therefore welcome this opportunity to exchange views with Mr. Morris about what the Council still needs to do in addressing food security in Africa, in the overall context of its work on peace and security.

In this regard, we would like to ask Mr. Morris a number of questions. First, the World Food Programme coordinates and cooperates with national Governments, the rest of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and corporate partners, both in emergencies and in development projects. While those entities are important, we believe that regional organizations can also help. As such, we would like to know whether the WFP has also established some sort of relationship or arrangement with regional organizations such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States.

Secondly, are there any success stories in any of the African countries in addressing food insecurity which could be used as a model by other countries in the region?

Lastly, a lot has been said in other forums about the need to empower women, who are both the key food providers and crucial to fighting AIDS. Are there any specific WFP projects that target women?

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like first of all to thank Mr. James Morris for the very detailed briefing that he gave us on the food crisis in Africa. We note that, unfortunately, that crisis is not only continuing but, in some cases, getting worse.

In that context, even though we know that we cannot completely control or overcome natural factors, such as drought, disease, sanitary conditions and pandemics, we can, and should, fight to eliminate the structural factors that impede the work of the World Food Programme, including, of course, war and its consequences — such as problems associated with displaced persons and refugees — as well as poor administration, lack of governance, bad governance and issues relating to world trade in agricultural products. Such factors are the responsibility of individuals, first and foremost leaders, who, in many cases, are not located in Africa.

With respect to emergency situations in Africa, which Mr. Morris described in great detail, we believe that it is very important for donor countries to increase their humanitarian assistance to the World Food Programme intended to alleviate hunger in that continent. We believe that, in the medium and long term, African citizens themselves must generate the policies and provide the leadership necessary to enable their countries to emerge from the situations about which we have heard today.

However, it is in that area that the international community has a responsibility. It should provide the necessary incentives for agricultural production in developing countries to become viable and exportable. We know that the current policy of subsidies, quotas and customs tariffs in the farming sectors of developed countries clearly distorts the prices of those commodities and prevents developing countries from being able to produce and export products in which they have a clear comparative advantage over the goods produced in developed countries. Obviously, I am referring to food production.

The existing link between development and peace has been underscored. In that regard, we believe it extremely important that the international community promote structural reforms in the rules of international

trade — for example, by promoting the Doha Round on agricultural products, among other measures.

All that would be of help to the international trade in the agricultural commodities of developing countries.

In conclusion, we would like to ask Mr. Morris whether the World Food Programme is considering increasing investments in basic agricultural infrastructure in Africa at both the micro- and macro-economic levels. We would also like to know about the existing relationship between the World Food Programme and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with regard to maintaining and increasing food security, which is one of the fundamental goals in the maintenance of peace and security on the African continent.

Mr. Kitaoka (Japan): I would like to thank Mr. Morris for his very informative and powerful briefing. His explanation of the situation in southern Africa, based on his recent trip to the region as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Humanitarian Needs there, was especially persuasive. We appreciate all of his hard work.

We share the view that, as Mr. Morris has just argued, peace and security cannot be maintained without tackling hunger. The Secretary-General stated in his report that

> "A world in which every year 11 million children die before their fifth birthday and three million people die of AIDS is not a world of larger freedom." (*A/59/2005, para. 26*)

The effect of hunger on children is especially devastating, as it robs them of their future. Desperate children without any means of obtaining food often have no other choice than to become soldiers. Hunger therefore also contributes to the serious problem of child soldiers. We are deeply concerned about children who are forced to experience such suffering, and we are determined to continue to provide assistance in that area, especially through, inter alia, school feeding programmes. School feeding programmes contribute to helping children to resume normal and peaceful lives, as well as to overcoming hunger and promoting education.

School feeding programmes were very useful when Japan was trying to recover from the war. Those programmes included the assistance of the United States, UNICEF and other countries and organizations. We are very grateful for that assistance.

Hunger, as an extreme form of poverty, results from various interrelated patterns. Low productivity is aggravated by conflict, natural disasters, HIV/AIDS and weak governance. Comprehensive remedies are needed to address problems of such complexity. In addition, even when productivity is relatively high, inefficient distribution systems or distribution systems distorted for one reason or another can prevent ordinary citizens from gaining access to food. Distribution is also a challenge to the food assistance programmes conducted by the World Food Programme (WFP). Accurate needs assessments and reliable monitoring are indispensable to distributing food to people in need. And both require sufficient cooperation from the Governments concerned.

Based on those observations, I would like to ask a few questions. First, how does the World Food Programme cooperate with other relevant United Nations agencies to address complex problems of hunger in a holistic manner? In that endeavour, what does Mr. Morris expect from intergovernmental bodies, especially from the Security Council?

Secondly, I assume that problems in the food distribution system also affect chronic hunger in the southern African region, which Mr. Morris visited. What are examples of such problems, and how is the WFP helping to solve them?

Thirdly, what are the challenges that Mr. Morris faces in obtaining cooperation from the Governments concerned, especially with regard to needs assessment and monitoring?

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank Mr. Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), for his briefing. I would also like to thank him for his positive assessment of China's poverty reduction strategy.

Over the years, the World Food Programme has been committed to providing emergency food assistance to countries and peoples that have experienced disasters. Not only has it eased humanitarian crises in recipient countries, it has also helped to resolve armed conflicts in the countries and regions concerned. We express our appreciation and support in that regard.

For quite some time, food crises have troubled many African countries. We believe that poverty is the root cause of conflict. In turn, conflict exacerbates poverty. Eliminating poverty is a requirement for international peace, development and stability. And ending conflict is a prerequisite for eliminating poverty, guaranteeing food security and achieving sustainable development. Conflicts on the African continent have ebbed and flowed. That is directly related to the issue of food crises. The Security Council, as the body with the primary responsibility for international peace and security, should adequately recognize that issue when analysing the causes of African conflict. That will help us to find basic solutions to the problem

We hope that today's meeting will lead all sides to pay adequate attention to the impact of the African food crisis on peace and security in that region, as well as to take effective measures to help the African continent to eliminate hunger and poverty. That is the only way we can hope to genuinely achieve peace and stability in Africa.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I offer many thanks to the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), Mr. Morris, for his very informative briefing on Africa's food crisis, as well as on the challenges which the World Food Programme — and, I would say, the international community — are facing in addressing hunger in the continent. We carefully noted the concerns of Mr. Morris, and I am pleased to share them.

Eradicating hunger is not merely a lofty idea. Access to adequate food has long been recognized as both an individual right and a collective responsibility. Yet, hunger — whether caused by war, drugs, natural disaster, civil strife or poverty — continues to cause widespread suffering. Like any event or process that leads to large-scale death or the lessening of life's opportunities, and undermines States as the basic unit of the international system, hunger is a threat to international security, as recognized by the Panel of Experts in its report on threats, challenges and change.

Unfortunately, current trends indicate persistent and possibly worsening food insecurity in many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. That is due to a combination of factors: difficult weather situations, health factors, civil strife resulting in refugees and internally displaced persons, and issues related to governance and economic policies. And unfortunately, food is still used as a weapon in war. There is a strong link between security and food security. For all those reasons, the issue of hunger is more than relevant to the Security Council, and in that regard, we welcome today's briefing.

The numbers Mr. Morris gave us are staggering. They point to a humanitarian situation of the utmost gravity. It is obvious that, in order to avert disaster, adequate levels of assistance must be provided immediately, but long-term measures and planning are also needed. The challenge is multifaceted and requires dealing with a variety of issues, such as the need for better synergy in emergency intervention and follow-up; sustainable development; and the link between humanitarian access, on the one hand, and malnutrition and poverty, on the other. The cases of Darfur and of certain regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo clearly demonstrate that a lack of humanitarian access leads to the further deterioration of the situation.

There are significant shortfalls in the funding of food assistance. As a result, we all know that, in Eritrea, two thirds of the population have been exposed to the risk of famine, while in Ethiopia the future of 3 million hungry Ethiopians is in jeopardy.

Government policies relating to food imports and the environment, as well as the impact of bad economic policy choices and the lack of political commitment to address the problem, also play a role. Zimbabwe, for example, is facing a critical economic situation, with food shortages and a ballooning budget deficit, together with high inflation, unemployment, and an accelerating rise in cases of HIV/AIDS. At the same time, investors have largely deserted the country following a land-reform policy and concerns about property rights and the rule of law.

Another issue of great relevance to Africa is what Mr. Morris repeatedly described as a "triple threat": hunger, AIDS and low Government capacity.

In concluding, I would like to ask some questions. We have heard various estimates for various crises in various countries. Is there any global estimate for what is required to cover the total needs in Africa? We welcome the fact that the World Food Programme has made the eradication of poverty and the provision of nourishment to orphans and vulnerable children a priority in its policy. In that context, what, in Mr. Morris's view, can the international community do

specifically with respect to the challenge of child hunger? Lastly, given the relationship between HIV/AIDS and hunger, I wonder whether he might explain to us what kind of cooperation exists between the World Food Programme and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Aho-Glele (Benin) (*spoke in French*): I, too, should like to thank Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), for his excellent briefing on the food crisis in southern Africa. The points he made were very telling, in that they say much about the silent suffering of people in Africa. We pay tribute to the Secretary-General for having taken the wise initiative of dispatching the Executive Director of the WFP to the region.

The guarantee of food security for people around the world should not pose major difficulties in terms of global food production. The challenge is one of distribution. In that respect, famine is the scourge that best highlights the dysfunction of the world system today. Clearly, that system compels poor countries to bear the brunt of the structural adjustments necessary for it to function. Agricultural subsidy policies stifle the rural sectors in developing countries, and the international community should be concerned about that. It should encourage the developed countries to undertake the necessary reforms to give the developing countries a chance of survival. The international community must see to it, in particular, that food is distributed throughout the world so as to mitigate extreme poverty and natural disasters.

We welcome WFP activities on behalf of the countries affected by the pandemic of famine, especially in Africa. We welcome its emphasis on the distress of poor countries at peace, which do not receive the necessary support from the international community to promote their sustainable development.

We believe that political disputes should not affect the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We do not understand why political considerations should impede the delivery of assistance to a country stricken by HIV/AIDS, given that the international community has established a Fund to combat that disease. Food aid should be used as a channel to revitalize societies affected by famine and malnutrition, particularly in countries in which extreme poverty is endemic.

The international community must fully exercise its responsibility to protect populations under threat in vulnerable countries. It should recognize that peace and security are threatened by the protracted destabilization in sub-Saharan countries as a result of the combined effects of conflicts, climactic conditions, and the fight for survival and control of the meager resources available.

Many delegations have stressed the linkage between poverty and conflict. We fully endorse that point. The Security Council should appeal for the establishment of a special programme to rescue countries whose situations are particularly tragic. In that regard, I associate my delegation with the call by the representative of the United Kingdom for concerted international action to prevent conflicts before they occur. The credibility of the United Nations, and in particular of the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, would benefit from the enhancement of their conflict-prevention capacities.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin by thanking Mr. James Morris for his excellent and comprehensive briefing, which reflected an integrated approach to matters of peace, development and human dignity.

Mr. Morris began his briefing by quoting President Obasajo, who said that a hungry person is an angry person. For my part, I should like to quote a famous French politician, who said that a dissatisfied person is a poor person who thinks.

My country believes that while hunger has cyclical causes such as drought and poor resource management, structural causes are also involved. I do not wish to repeat what was said this week during the debate in the General Assembly, which is continuing in the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, because we believe that those two bodies are better equipped than the Security Council to identify obstacles and propose solutions.

Nonetheless, I believe that, with respect to structural causes, issues related to international governance, food production and the weakening of agriculture in developing countries due to the unfair practice of developed countries' providing huge subsidies are relevant to this debate.

With respect to the Security Council's mandate, I should like to express our agreement with Mr. Morris's view that food should never become an instrument of

war or of diplomatic coercion, regardless of how a Government may be viewed. Our hope is that the members of the Security Council will, in the course of this debate, hear a reaffirmation of that cardinal moral principle.

In conclusion, I should like to express Algeria's appreciation for the efforts that the WFP is deploying in Africa, in particular in support of the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and for the efforts it is making at the international level. It can rest assured of our support.

Mrs. Patterson (United States of America): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, and also to thank Mr. Morris for his informative briefing on the correlation between hunger and peace and security in Africa. This is a highly appropriate topic for Security Council discussion.

The challenges in Africa represent a compelling call for international cooperation to support the continent's efforts to achieve lasting progress, peace and security. We would like to draw attention to some specific situations where hunger continues to threaten peace and security on the African continent.

In the Sudan, insufficient resources to meet humanitarian needs in Darfur could exacerbate existing tensions and violence as well as provoke additional cross-border displacement into eastern Chad. In southern Sudan, reduced food contributions will hamper resettlement and further stretch the already scarce household resources of both resident and returnee populations.

Ethiopia, in addition to the current acute crisis, suffers from chronic drought and problems stemming from overpopulation, land degradation, poor market systems and infrastructure, and the delayed implementation of the public safety net programme.

The United States believes that at least 12 million people are at risk, and the United Nations estimates that over 500,000 children are suffering from various forms of malnutrition. Localized famine conditions exist in a number of regions within the country, and the situation is expected to deteriorate if more resources are not provided to address urgent humanitarian needs.

In West Africa, inadequately resourced food pipelines have already forced the World Food Programme (WFP) to reduce rations in refugee camps in Sierra Leone. In Liberia, inadequate resettlement packages for returnees will be complicated by ration cuts in the coming months, coinciding with the national election period. Those could serve as a flashpoint in an already volatile environment and further inhibit the resettlement process.

The Government of the Niger has also recently declared a food security emergency. The United Nations reports that 3.6 million of that country's inhabitants, including 800,000 children, are vulnerable; 13.4 percent of children there are acutely malnourished, and 2.5 percent are severely malnourished. Such alarming rates are normally associated with conflict-torn countries.

In southern Africa, WFP had planned to provide food aid to 8 million people. At the present time, WFP stocks and food pipelines in all six countries of the region are extremely limited. Without new commitments, WFP will be unable to meet the food needs of several million highly vulnerable southern Africans. Lives are unquestionably at stake. Recent fragile gains towards good governance and the number of people benefiting from antiretroviral therapy are also at serious risk.

Zimbabwe is a particular problem, as its food problems are politically motivated and not caused by natural conditions. We are deeply concerned at the fact that the ongoing campaign to demolish low-income housing and informal businesses has created at least 420,000 homeless persons, many of whom are children. Depriving those people of shelter and income has aggravated the already serious humanitarian crisis. We stand ready to assist Zimbabwe with large-scale food assistance, as we did in 2002-2004, but we strongly oppose Government policies that are making the problem worse, and we urge the Government to end the slum-demolition campaign. We urge the Government to engage in a dialogue with the opposition and civil society to end Zimbabwe's political impasse and to halt the continuing decline of the economy. Zimbabwe's self-inflicted economic meltdown affects trade, investment and food security throughout southern Africa.

President Bush has challenged international partners in the donor community to provide greater assistance to Africa and to address the critical humanitarian needs identified by the United Nations. The United States has already provided nearly $1.4 billion this fiscal year for humanitarian needs in

Africa, and we will soon provide an additional $674 million. Today President Bush announced that he would ask Congress to spend $1.2 billion through 2008 to help fight malaria, which will benefit 1.2 million people a year, 95 per cent of whom are in sub-Saharan Africa.

The United States recognizes that global food insecurity is complex and dynamic, and that there is no standard recipe or solution that will properly address all the national and regional crises that we face today. The international community must continue to develop tools that are flexible enough to address the unique causes of each particular crisis.

African nations themselves remain responsible for the well-being of their citizens. They must take appropriate actions to address the root causes of crises. Malnutrition, especially in children, has long-term, irreversible consequences, ultimately decreasing economic productivity and hindering development.

Let me say in closing that Jim Morris has shown tremendous leadership in his role as head of WFP and as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Humanitarian Needs in Southern Africa. We would also like to commend the hard work of WFP field staff worldwide.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): We, too, thank the Special Envoy, Mr. James Morris, for his briefing and for his efforts to raise global awareness of the threats facing Africa. We welcome the Special Envoy today in the firm belief that his presence here will galvanize and direct energies at the global, regional and national levels in support of meeting the dire humanitarian needs of Africa.

What has been characterized as the triple threat of food insecurity, weakened capacity for governance and HIV/AIDS represents a real menace for Africa, but we believe that it can be overcome. It can be overcome with support, technical assistance and dialogue.

Africa has great potential. It has plenty of fertile agricultural land and is rich in natural resources.

But the widespread food crisis and the humanitarian crisis that affect our region also show how vulnerable it is. A common cause of the food shortages being faced in parts of Angola, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe is the erratic weather that has been experienced during the current crop production season. In some countries, this is the third or fourth successive year of crop failures. Dry spells and the late onset of rains have left many farmers with little or no harvest. We know that. In our own country, we consider ourselves fortunate because the current crop season indicates improvement in the food situation over last year's season, only because of better rainfall.

Widespread poverty has also constrained the productivity of the agricultural sector in Africa. As indicated, poverty is compounded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has an impact on the amount of land placed under cultivation as farmers become incapacitated by their own illness or by the demands of caring for sick family members. The continent's vulnerability is further exacerbated by the fact that most of our economies are based on agriculture and depend on the export of traditional or primary agricultural products. We import most of our manufactured goods, including agricultural inputs such as machinery and fertilizer, and we import them on trade terms that militate against both our agricultural and our industrial sectors. Those systemic imbalances need to be addressed.

African countries differ geographically, economically and in their levels of development. Climatic conditions are not uniform, and that results in the production of different crops and in differences in cropping patterns. That in turn indicates differing vulnerabilities to food crises. Some countries, such as Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia, are persistently prone to drought and famine.

There is ample literature about the extent to which governance contributes to hunger and poverty. None of us is immune to criticism; we all can do better, and we must strive to do so. We must also learn to engage in discourse that promotes our shared aspirations and our collective commitment to move forward in the interests of all our people. In meeting those challenges — governance, food insecurity and combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic — capacities differ. Countries in the region need to be assisted to enhance and sustain their capabilities.

The region of southern Africa, for instance, is also grappling with those challenges, believing that our people expect and want to see their quality of life improved through increased economic growth that is

regionally driven and based and that is pro-poor. The following illustrates that pursuit.

In 2003, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) adopted what is called the SADC HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework and Programme of Action, 2003-2007. In 2004, we adopted the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, which set out a vision for an integrated community. The same year, we also adopted the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, which, among other things, seeks to develop an early-warning and vulnerability monitoring system — an intervention strategy that we believe could be a valuable interface for international partnership. In addition, we have the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, adopted in November 2004. Lastly, we have the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, adopted at the summit held in August 2004.

Africa has had many tears shed for it — some, I might even say, crocodile tears. We know that, for, as a country that hosts a huge population of refugees from war-torn countries, we have seen repeated pleas for food assistance go unheeded. The archives of the Organization are full of best intentions. We are all far better at talking than at acting. It is our hope that the High-level Plenary Meeting this September will present an opportunity — a turning point — that we should not miss.

What Africa needs is the support of the international community in enabling the region to face the challenges that confront it. The collective determination of the region to overcome is firm. Concrete responses to the Special Envoy's appeal are urgently needed and must be heeded as humanitarian action.

Lastly, with regard to Zimbabwe, we share the concerns about the reported dislocation of people in urban areas. We note that the Secretary-General has sent the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, as his Special Envoy to examine the impact of the Government's "Operation Restore Order". The Council has just heard a number of competing figures regarding the actual number of displaced persons. In our view, it is only fitting that we reserve any judgement on the issue until the matter is clarified.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a brief statement in my national capacity.

First, I should like to express our gratitude to Mr. Morris for his extremely clear, precise and interesting briefing on a very important subject. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts of Mr. Morris and the World Food Programme.

I have two questions to ask of Mr. Morris. The first concerns access to populations and the related issue of the security of humanitarian personnel. That, as we know, is a crucial issue. Jan Egeland, when he addressed the Council on 21 June, recalled his concerns regarding the subject. In particular, he called for a strengthening of the mandate of peacekeeping operations, referring to the creation of security zones or security corridors, which would be related to humanitarian priorities. I would be interested to know Mr. Morris's point of view on that issue in the light of his experiences on the ground.

My second comment: Mr. Morris gave a horrifying description of the nutritional situation of children, particularly in southern Africa. We are aware of his work to promote a global initiative to fight child hunger. Perhaps it would be useful for Mr. Morris to tell us what he expects of the international community and how the initiative might be coordinated with UNICEF and World Bank activities in the region.

Finally, we listened carefully to Mr. Morris's report on his visit to Southern Africa. We have taken note of his information on the situation there, and in particular on the situation in Zimbabwe, where he said that 4 million people were at risk. France is concerned about the food situation in Zimbabwe, and we hope that the efforts of the international community, including those of the World Food Programme, will succeed in sustainably improving the lives of the people of that country.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call once again on Mr. Morris and invite him to respond to the questions and comments of Council members.

Mr. Morris: I thank all Council members for their perceptive, useful, helpful and encouraging comments and questions. I will do my best to respond. Members asked lots of questions worthy of longer

responses, and we will try to provide such responses in writing soon.

The first issue that was raised related to the Sudan: southern Sudan and the humanitarian issues there, including the refugee issue. The situation is very serious. Our estimates suggest, setting Darfur aside, that there are 3.2 million people who need help in the part of the Sudan that is affected by the current peace process. People are returning, but the number of people who have fled, for example, to Kenya as refugees is actually exceeding the number of people who are coming back to southern Sudan.

I think the entire humanitarian community is woefully underfunded. I have not come here to ask for money; that is not my purpose in being here this morning. But Council members have invested billions of dollars in the peace process — feeding people and providing shelter and other kinds of humanitarian assistance — during the 21-year conflict. My concern, which I think is widely shared, is that, if we are not able at least to provide food, water and shelter for people as they come home, much could be at risk.

We are doing better in Darfur. The resourcing is going pretty well. The security issue in Darfur involves a great deal of risk. We have now concluded that at the high point of the peak hunger season in Darfur we could be required to provide food for 3.5 million people, and I have even heard it suggested on occasion that this could go as high as 4 million. There are, essentially, 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs); but there has been no crop production in Darfur this year, and until people feel safe and secure about going home there will be no crop production next year. The worst fear is that, if people are not comfortable going home and beginning life again to start the agricultural cycle, we could end up with a situation like the one we have in Algeria, where the Western Sahara refugees have now been there 27 years, with more people having been born in the camps than came to the camps originally.

Thus, restoring order, peace and security is fundamental to enabling people to go home. But the fact of the matter is that there would be another 2 million people in Darfur who would depend on agricultural production from people who are now IDPs. In order to preserve the peace, we have to be as focused on the host community as we are on the IDPs or the refugees. Otherwise chaos could ensue: one would end up with a situation where the World Food Programme, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and various non-governmental organizations have worked effectively to reduce malnutrition in the camps, and where suddenly the nutritional status of people in the camps, especially children, is substantially better than that of people on the perimeter.

We have been very lucky that the Government of Chad and the people of eastern Chad have been very hospitable in welcoming the refugees that have come from Darfur into Chad. But that has led to an enormous responsibility. We see that, with this population coming in, water resources and food resources have been overwhelmed; the international community has responded generously to help the local population. I suspect that we are providing food support for between 200,000 and 250,000 refugees in Chad and ultimately probably not quite that many local citizens, though a substantial number.

So I urge the Council please to remain very focused on our work and that of the entire humanitarian community in the Sudan. It is very risky. I do not want to repeat myself, but I will recall that we fed 1.8 million people in May. Probably another 700,000 people in the north and in the south should have been fed, but for security reasons we simply could not get to them. We had and continue to have the food available to put into position because of the rainy season. We have almost 900 trucks under contract, but three truck drivers from private contractors have been killed in the past month, and it is easy to imagine what a disincentive that becomes for people to want to do that kind of work.

The security issue is the pre-eminent issue in terms of the humanitarian response and in terms of the long-term response. We work very closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the Sudan. We support the inter-agency process. We understand and support the notion of integrated missions. In the Sudan we work closely with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Pronck, and his Deputy Special Representatives. We have to be careful not to confuse, in the public's mind, the role of the humanitarian community with the role of peacekeepers. We have to work together, but as soon as the conflicting population sees the humanitarian community as an extension of peacekeeping or military

activity they are less likely to respect the humanitarian space, as has traditionally been the case.

Our job is to feed the hungry at-risk population. We leave the political issues for others to resolve. We are just as concerned about those who are starving — mostly women and children — wherever they find themselves in the conflict. We have to have the respect of all sides to a controversy in order to do our work. We are, clearly, involved in the joint assessment mission process, and today there is much more conversation about how we work together than there was three or four years ago.

The issue of Southern Africa and how the United Nations family is working together may not be interesting for front-page news coverage. But what is happening in Johannesburg, where the regional offices are located, is that the entire United Nations family has come together. The World Health Organization, UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Food Programme are essentially co-located. The regional directors are functioning as a single team. That is the epitome of United Nations reform, happening on the ground, in the field. It is happening because, first, the crisis is so enormous, but also because people are focused on the beneficiaries. I tell my colleagues at WFP that, if we do our work with the beneficiaries, everything else about WFP will be taken care of; we will not have to worry about it. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is part of that effort as well. I think that members would all be extraordinarily pleased about the way in which the United Nations family is working in the field at the regional level.

We are working to try to get the United Nations country teams to reflect that same partnership. That requires a new sense of leadership, a new calibre of leadership among the resident coordinators. In places like Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana and Namibia — countries that have populations of less than 2 million — if there are suddenly 30 donors and 10 United Nations agencies on the scene, and the Governments have a dramatically weakened capacity for all the reasons that we have talked about, the Governments are simply overwhelmed, and they spend their time responding to us, instead of focusing on the substantive agenda. We have got to find a way to bring the United Nations family almost completely together, especially in the very small countries. I am sort of encouraged that places like Botswana are very much interested in doing that.

Comparing where we are today to where we were three years ago shows that there has been a remarkable amount of progress. I always meet with the leaders of the non-governmental organization (NGO) community before we start a mission and, truly, without exception, they have begged the United Nations community to stay together as a single family, because it serves them a very well.

The issues in Zimbabwe are challenging and difficult. It is a place where about 4 million people are now at risk. At the high point of 2003, we provided food for 5.5 million people in Zimbabwe; in 2004 it went down to 4 million; and this April we provided food for 1.1 million. I have to tell the Council that we started off with four NGO partners. At the high point we went to 23; today we have 15.

I visited with President Mugabe within the past month, and we had a very straightforward conversation about the importance of our being able to go anywhere in the country to feed the hungriest and the poorest, of having no interference or political guidance or influence whatsoever with regard to where we go and how we do our work. I said that we could not do our work without our NGO partners, and that they needed to be respected and supported.

Three years ago, when I made my first visit, I simply said that if we did not have that freedom and flexibility, we would simply leave — we would have zero tolerance for any interference. I have to say that we have been able to do our work to distribute the food that the World Food Programme receives because the Council supports us. We have been able to do out work and respond to those who need us most. This time I had the same conversation again, and emphasized the critical importance of the NGO community.

I can assure the Council, without any equivocation, that the food that members are providing for us is getting to those who need it in Zimbabwe. There are other sources of food that the Government distributes, and I have had the same conversation with the President about the Government adhering to the same kind of internationally accepted policies that we follow. But I can assure the Council that the food that members give us is getting to those who need it.

This is a tough situation. You may recall that a year ago they estimated that their cereal crop production would be 2.4 million metric tons. They need 1.8 million metric tons of cereal to feed the population. The best estimates now of the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) — a body comprising representatives from the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and the Government — suggest that crop production will be between 400,000 and 600,000 metric tons. That is different from the food assessment survey that the WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations would do together, but it is sophisticated enough that we have adequate reliance on it, and we can represent to you that we have confidence in it. As I said Zimbabwe needs 1.8 million tons to feed the population and had represented that crop production would be 2.4 million metric tons. So now there is a shortfall of, in the worst case, 1.4 million tons, and in the best case, 1.2 million tons.

The Government of Zimbabwe has said, "We take ownership. It is our responsibility to feed our people, and we have tendered and committed to buy 1.2 million metric tons of food". That is the public position; that is what they would say if asked that question. They would also say that they are going to buy an additional 600,000 tons of food to replenish their reserves. They have been reluctant to ask the international community for help, but they have used words to the effect that if the international community chooses to help them, such support would be welcome. We are uncomfortable with that. It is easier in our tradition to do business if people say what they need and explain it, and we go about pulling it together.

We have essentially said that we will try to raise resources and food in the neighbourhood of 300,000 metric tons. Clearly, if their 1.2 million comes in and the 400,000 to 600,000 is produced, that, together with the 300,000, would slightly exceed their cereal requirement. Only time will tell. This is a very tough issue. They clearly had a bad weather situation, but you all know the dynamics there as well as or better than I do. There are a few places in the world that I worried a lot about last year, including North Korea and the Sudan, and this is in that category. So we will simply keep you posted.

I am grateful that Russia talked about the multilateral approach. There are all sorts of reasons why one country chooses to help another country. But if I can just tell you that through multilateral support — support that goes through institutions like ours, or through NGOs — 90 per cent of the food that we distribute gets to the hungriest, the poorest people in a country. We have no agenda whatsoever, other than the humanitarian agenda of ensuring that those most at risk — usually women and children — are fed. We know that we are very good at assessing need, targeting the distribution and actually physically doing the distribution and then measuring, monitoring and evaluating what we have done, and we are accountable to you.

So, as you think about what the agendas are — and I appreciate the fairness of all sorts of approaches — the humanitarian approach of getting food to those who are most at risk is best done, more often than not, through a multilateral institution. We do not monetize food. We are very respectful of markets. So I would just like to make that point quickly.

I am grateful that the representative of Brazil mentioned the notion of forgotten emergencies. We all get focused on the tsunami, or we get focused on Darfur; but the fact of the matter is that 92 per cent of the people who will die today of hunger will die in places that are not in the headlines, forgotten places that most people just do not think about. The life lost in the dusty road in Bolivia or Malawi or Bangladesh is just as precious as the life lost in a high-profile situation. We were all generously funded with regard to the tsunami; we had all the money we needed. But the fact of the matter is that 25,000 people die every day of hunger — 18,000 children, a child every five seconds, all day long. Every 10 days there is a "tsunami" in the world, in all sorts of places.

Our Romanian colleague asked what the Council could do. It is the most important decision-making body in the entire world. The fact that the Security Council would focus on the issue of hunger, as it has today and several times earlier, is a powerful message.

I have tried to respond to my colleague from the United Kingdom, talking about building capacity.

Clearly, climate change is certain, but there is a difference. We are doing three times as many natural disaster assessments today as we did in 1960. I am not a scientist, but I know that things have changed.

Humanitarian access is a basic principle of our work. We rarely compromise it. We require that we

have complete access to any population in any country where we work. With regard to the security dimensions to humanitarian access, in the last year we have quadrupled our own security coverage. That is having a huge impact on our budget. It is costing more, making fewer resources available to feed people. We have 135 duty stations throughout the world that are categorized as phase III or higher under the standards of the United Nations Security Coordinator. Several members of the Council have said nice things about our staff. Their humanitarian commitment is remarkable. We have a wall of honour in our building. Sixty-two people from the World Food Programme (WFP) have been killed in humanitarian service. We require that we can go anywhere. North Korea is about the only place in the world where we do not have complete access. We have access to about 160 of the 203 counties in North Korea. That is the only place where we somewhat compromise our access requirement.

I appreciate the reference by members of the Council to the Millennium Development Goals and child hunger. I strongly believe that a concerted worldwide effort led by the WFP, UNICEF, the World Bank and the relevant non-governmental organizations, with support from the business, faith and youth-serving communities can make a difference. Let us say that there are probably 115 million people in Africa who need help: 93 million children and their mothers. There is no substitute for being born to a healthy mother and nursed by a healthy mother. Our estimates are that that constitutes an annual expense of about $5 billion. Forty to 50 per cent of that can be provided by host Governments. Kenya supports our work to feed children in Kenya in an extraordinary way. Malawi does the same thing: it made a $13 million commitment to help support WFP's work in Malawi.

My own sense is that we need a movement in the world that says that it is no longer acceptable for children to be hungry. If only everyone would just do a little more. The cost of getting that done is the same amount of money we spent to feed the people of Belgium after the First World War. It is the same amount of money we spent to feed people during the Berlin airlift. It is the same amount of money we spent to build Disneyland in Paris. We have got to figure out how we, as the international community, can eliminate child hunger in the world. The Council will see UNICEF, the World Bank, the Red Cross and all sorts of people mobilizing to take action in that regard.

We now have commercial partners. We could not have done our work in the tsunami without the help of Citicorp, the Boston Consulting Group and the Dutch company T & T. The latter has 175,000 employees. Every one of them has made the commitment to feed a school child, and the company has committed itself to matching their contributions. When we begin to put enough pieces in place, we can make a difference.

Canada has made a remarkable commitment to feed children in five countries in Africa. In Mali, as I may have mentioned earlier, its commitment to girls' education has increased the enrolment of girls from 34 to 43 per cent in two years. I am hopeful that France and Belgium will take a special look at francophone countries in Africa. The child enrolment in schools in Niger is very low.

We have a chance to build the same kind of partnership in Central America. In a place like Guatemala, 50 per cent of the children under the age of 5 are chronically malnourished. The numbers are smaller in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, but they are large. The Inter-American Development Bank, the business community and the World Bank are getting involved.

These are doable things, and clearly very important things. I am hopeful that we will find a way to build this extraordinary partnership. If we feed the 300 million hungry children in the world, that would account for about half of the hungry people there are. As you feed a child you make an enormous contribution to infant mortality, maternal health, gender equity — as hunger disproportionately affects girls — the issue of HIV/AIDS and universal primary education. Those coincide with the first six of the Millennium Development Goals. If we focus on child hunger, we will be able to make huge progress in that regard.

I also appreciated the comments made by the representative of Japan. It is a very moving experience to be in Japan — or in Germany, for that matter — to talk with people who benefited from the rebuilding of their education systems and from the international community's generosity in providing food, milk and cereal for distribution through school systems. I had the former Minister for Agriculture of Japan tell me that the fact that the United States went in to provide milk and cereal to the people of Japan after the Second World War brought Japan's education system alive and

changed his country. I had the same experience with ministers in Germany. The fact of the matter is that every child in the world deserves that kind of support. Such support begins to diminish envy and anger, and makes a huge contribution to peace and security.

We work very closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). I will not take the time to go through them in great detail, but the partnerships are very good, especially on the ground in the field.

I appreciated China's commitment. We have worked in China for 40 years and have fed tens of millions of people there. China no longer needs us. We will close our operations in China in December of this year, and China will become a major donor to the WFP, which is a wonderful transition. The WFP will always be available to help China in an emergency, but that country will become an important stand-by partner to help us respond to emergencies.

The representative of Greece asked questions about child hunger. We are a very close partner of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). The head of UNAIDS would say that hunger and nutrition are the most important factors in the fight against HIV. If people are well nourished, they have a better chance to resist. If they are infected and well nourished, they can resist opportunistic diseases. If they are pretty far along and well nourished, they will have a few more months or years to live with their children.

Beyond that, the single most important effort that the world needs to make in the battle against HIV is educating children aged 5 to 15 about the seriousness of this pandemic. That is best done in school and best done when children are fed and nourished, so they can learn in school. Peter Piot would tell you that, when he goes to a village with a high HIV prevalence rate, the first thing they ask for is food and water. Antiretroviral treatment does not work in a poorly nourished body.

I wish to thank my colleague from Algeria, which has become a very important donor. We work closely with the African Union and in the context of New Partnership for Africa's Development. With respect to the issue of basic investment in agricultural infrastructure, at one point 12 per cent of ODA went to basic investment. That figure is now down to 4 per cent. With 80 per cent of Africa relying on agriculture, to cut by two thirds the amount of investment in basic infrastructure for agriculture just does not make sense. NEPAD and the African Union have made a commitment to encouraging African countries to invest 10 per cent in basic agricultural infrastructure. That will make a profound difference if it comes to fruition.

We do a lot of small food-for-work projects, where we invest in micro-irrigation systems or in the rebuilding of roads, but we do not have the capacity to do the macro stuff. That is an important step in the right direction that NEPAD and the African Union have taken.

Clearly we are profoundly grateful to the United States. Its focus on the Niger gives me a chance to mention not only the locust infestation, which is overwhelming, but also the fact that, in the nine Sahel countries that have among the lowest school enrolment in the world, we have a chance to work together with nine ministers of health and education to dramatically turn that situation around, especially in a place like the Niger, where maybe 20 per cent of the children go to school. We know that, when there is a meal at school, children come, they stay, they learn, and, if they go for a month in a row, we give them a package of vegetable oil to take home to sort of compensate the family for the lost energy of the child's not being home to help.

I would say to the representative of Tanzania that we work closely with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). SADC is our very close partner in terms of regional work, in terms of food security, in terms of HIV, in terms of early warning systems — and that is a good thing.

The representative of France asked a question about access to the population and the security of our personnel. I hope that I have answered that question. He also raised the issue of the nutritional concerns of children. We are very focused on iodine, on iron, on vitamin A; we know that, if we can fortify food — it is very inexpensive to fortify a school biscuit or some other food commodity that is going to be distributed — a small investment will provide enormous leverage in terms of the overall commodities to be distributed.

I hope that you all will help us think through how we build this movement — this partnership — to change the issue of child hunger in the world. If you feed a young girl, and she goes to school for a few years, everything about her life changes. We can feed a child in Bangladesh for $16 for a school year. We can feed a child in North Korea for $24 a year, and, generally, for about $35 a year, we can provide a meal for a child every single school day of the year. The power of the investment is just enormous.

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to thank Mr. Morris for the additional information he has given us and for the answers that he has provided to the members of the Council.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.